

# Beef Briefs

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ular trait. An EPD is, genetically, the average value for a particular trait of the gametes (the genes going from a sire to an offspring in a given mating) produced by a bull. It is further expressed as a deviation from the average of all of the bulls being compared (Bull A has an EPD of 2.6, while Bull B has an EPD of - 4.1).

How this information is used

depends on the particular needs and goals of the breeder. For example, a breeder who cannot intensively manage cows during the calving season may want to find a bull with good EPD's for low birth weight while at least keeping EPD's for growth traits like weaning and yearling weight near zero (average for the breed) or above. Another breeder, however, may manage his cows differently during calving and feeds out all of his calves. He may then want to select bulls for high EPD's for growth and carcass traits. The important thing is the wealth of

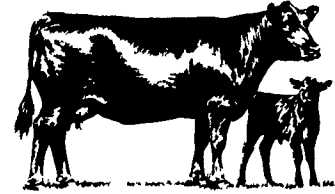
information that is available and the accuracy with which it can be used. EVERY BULL BUYER SHOULD INSIST ON HAVING THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO HIM FROM THE BREEDER.

While fertility tests and genetic evaluation can be important tools to the breeder, a good close look at the bull is still needed. Structural soundness, condition, and temperament are also traits of consideration.

Where can bulls be found? Pennsylvania is blessed with many progressive purebred breeders of

many breeds. Contact your local Extension agent for those in your area, or the breed representative of your choice. Another opportunity to find bulls is at the Pennsylvania

Tested Bull Sale to be held at Penn State on Friday, March 25 at 12:00 noon. For more information about this sale, contact either me or Glenn Eberly at 814-238-2527.



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